

ROMA-8768

MAY 11 1956

Chief of Station, Germany

Chief of Base, Bonn

Operational/CADREY/CALL/CART/ICIMPROVE

Professor Gerhard von MERTHE

INFO: EE
BOB
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1. [] advised a few days ago that he had had a two-hour meeting with Subject. The latter had been seeking such a meeting for quite some time (CARBANA had previously advised us of Subject's feelers in that direction), and it took place in [] office on 7 May.

2. [] said that they had discussed mutual problems but that Subject appeared to make a conscious effort not to ask questions impinging upon [] operational problems in the Soviet Zone. The entire field was covered in broad outlines and, while [] did not say so, they also almost without question discussed the [] case, in which both of them were involved to some extent.

3. However, Subject was particularly interested in obtaining [] interpretation of the 20th CPSU Congress and subsequent related events. He was also interested in hearing [] views on how best to counter Communist and fellow-travelling subversion efforts in the Federal Republic. The reason for Subject's special interest in this direction is based on the fact (according to Subject) that he has been chosen to head up a special unit now being set up by the Interior Ministry for the purpose of training an "elite" of West German individuals whose job it will be to counter Communist and fellow-travelling subversion efforts by holding schooling courses, seminars, and other public forums of a similar nature for various West German organizations, by giving prior indoctrination courses to West German delegations about to visit the GDR, and by being available for speaking assignments for private organizations desirous of being informed about the danger of Communist subversion efforts.

4. [] asked the case officer for an evaluation of Subject, stating that his general impression was a fairly good one, albeit somewhat confusing. The case officer informed [] that Subject is known to have had and to continue to have his fingers in a multitude of intelligence and semi-intelligence activities, that his role in that connection was blurred to the point where no one could really be quite sure as to his real backers or even the true nature of his assignments, and that - while no definitely derogatory information was known to the case officer - it might be well if [] did not allow his relationship with Subject to become too close. [] asked whether it would be possible for us to give him a more detailed reading on Subject, and we told him we would see what could be done along that line.

5. No definite promise having been made, we need not actually follow through. However, if COS or any of the other addressees should consider it desirable to

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give [] confidential briefing of this type, we shall appreciate receiving from CDS a brief summary of information that can be used in that connection (our files do contain considerable data on subjects but we are not in a position to judge what parts thereof are payable to []).

6. On the off-chance that the R port's Section is interested in disseminating the factual information in Paragraph 3 above, it is suggested that this dispatch be made available also to them.

7. Your early reply with respect to Paragraph 5 above will be appreciated.

9 MAY 1956

Distribution:

3 - CDS
2 - MI
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